

BUDWOOD NURSERIES

By

CHANDRA SAMARANAYAKE

During a survey conducted recently on budwood multiplication nurseries in the island, it became clearly evident that, the recommended practices have not been practised in the establishment and maintenance of budwood multiplication nurseries, in the recent past. There has been a severe mixing up of clones as a result. This was further confirmed during the survey conducted to identify areas planted with clone RRIC 103, in connection with the incidence of *Corynespora* leaf spot disease, caused by the fungus *Corynespora cassicola*.

To reap the benefits from the vigorous, high yielding, disease resistant clones it is extremely important to multiply the authenticated material of these clones.

There is a Nursery Inspection Unit in the Rubber Research Institute, manned by personnel competent to identify clones and to give necessary advice in the establishment and maintenance of budwood multiplication nurseries and rootstock seedling nurseries. Their services can be obtained by the State Plantations as well as the private nurserymen.

This article discusses the measures that should be adopted in the establishment and the maintenance of a budwood multiplication nursery so that mixing up clones can be prevented.

1. The authenticated material should be used for initial introduction of a clone into a budwood multiplication nursery.

Budgraft the clonal material in a separate section of the stock seedling nursery. Carefully label each stock with the clone budded, for later transference into the budwood nurseries either as budded stumps or as budded stumps grown in polybags.

2. Remove all stock shoots if they appear and allow only the scion shoots to grow. (It was noticed during our survey that in many nurseries, stock shoots have been allowed to grow instead of the scion shoot and budwood from stock shoots have been used for multiplication purposes).

All lateral shoots if they appear, should be pinched off, up to a height of 2.4m. Side shoots rarely appear in a closely planted nursery, if the terminal elongation takes place without long rest periods and correct cultural practices are adopted.

3. Surround each block planted with a particular clone by two strands of galvanised wire on iron or hardwood posts.
4. A separate access should be provided for each clonal block.
5. The correct nomenclature of the clone should be displayed using permanent lettering, in each block.
6. On no account should more than one clone be included in a block.
7. The authenticity of the clone planted should be reconfirmed by the officers of the Nursery Inspection Unit of this Institute, before any budwood is harvested (If there are any plants which are not true to type, they can be eliminated at this stage).
8. Prior to cutting of budwood, a band of tar should be painted on every plant, 15 cm above the graft union. No shoots should be allowed to appear below the tar band. Budwood is cut for the first time at 30 cm from the union.
9. Over budding on existing clones with new clones should never be practised.
10. A plan for each nursery, with the planting points of each clone correctly numbered, should be maintained.
11. If possible, the cutting of budwood from various points should be recorded along with the date and number. The name of the consignee of the budwood should also be recorded for future reference.
12. The budwood should be labelled immediately after removal from the plant with a copying pencil. The cut ends are then dipped in molten paraffin wax.

If these practices are adopted there will be no mixing up of clones in a nursery. The authenticated material will be available for production of budded stumps, and extra care should be taken not to mix up clones in stock seedling nurseries during budgrafting.